

UNITED WE STAND



The police lie. They said Roger Sylvester threatened his neighbour and that Mark Duggan had a gun. They said Joy Gardner was the most violent woman they'd ever met. They lose, move or destroy evidence and change their stories in court. Since 1990, 1,516 people have been killed by the police - and no-one has been charged.

Because the cops will go to any length to cover themselves, the families and friends of people killed in custody have been denied justice. They have seen their loved ones vilified in the press and the officers who killed them get off scot free.

GRAINGER DANGER

Plans to build a 22-storey monstrosity on the corner of Seven Sisters Road and Tottenham High Road were unveiled earlier this year. The mega-structure, at the site of Apex House, will contain 154 homes. None will be what we consider genuinely affordable. The sale of the site has been somewhat of a farce from the beginning and the connections with the Wards Corner site opposite go some way to explaining the dodgy dealings that have taken place.

Back in the summer of 2014, it was announced the building had been sold off to the UK's largest property developer, Grainger, who paid just £3.4 million for the public owned site. A figure the council tried to prevent going public.

The sale didn't go on the open market where by their own admission the Council could have got a better deal. A strange decision for a Council who are forcing through drastic cuts in services due to lack of funds. This smells of corruption, not just bad management.

At the same meeting it was stated the Apex House site could be used to build 100% council housing but, with the cost being some £13 million, it was claimed there was not enough money to fund this kind of much needed housing. Better then to gift a wealthy developer with the opportunity to make a nice little profit at the expense of local people's needs.

Apex House is currently home to the Council's housing office, where people go if they are homeless, facing eviction or struggling to pay their rent. It is somewhat ironic that the council is planning to evict their own staff and squeeze them into Marcus Garvey Library - whose current users are not too

We support United Families and Friends Campaign, a coalition of those affected by deaths in police, prison and psychiatric custody. Established as a network of Black families, the group now includes the families and friends of people from varied ethnicities. They include the families of Joy Gardner, Mark Duggan, Roger Sylvester, and many others killed in custody in our borough and elsewhere.

If you would like to support the campaign, check out their website: uffcampaign.org. Their annual procession is on 31st October, assemble 12 noon at Trafalgar Square. We'll be there, and we hope to see you there too.

pleased with the idea. As for those seeking help and advice from the housing office, it is highly unlikely that they will be able to afford a home in the new development when completed.

Grainger are also trying to redevelop the Wards Corner site over Seven Sisters tube station. The plans for 198 homes don't include any social housing: although the Council insisted this was a requirement they later backed down, saying they could provide social housing elsewhere. Hence the gift of Apex House.

Grainger have faced stiff opposition from local residents and traders. For the last eight years the Wards Corner Community Coalition (WCC) have been demanding their right to determine their own future and not be forced out by a greedy property developer or uncaring Council.

Despite the setbacks and obstacles put in their way, WCC have shown resilience and a determination to bring their own ideas to the table. Last April they were granted planning permission for their community led plan. WCC are a great example of what can be achieved when people join together to fight back against the bullying tactics of powerful organisations.

Although they have come so far, they still have a battle on their hands to achieve their aim, and need the support of local people to push forward their community plan. And people also need to demand Grainger focus on local needs in their plans for Apex House.

MORE INFO
wardscornercommunity@riseup.net

WHO WE ARE: In 1991, Haringey Solidarity Group (HSG) emerged from the Anti-Poll Tax campaign, formed by Haringey residents with a wide range of backgrounds and views. We wanted to create a long-term, vibrant, non-hierarchical group, unlike political parties where ambitions and posturing displace real politics.

We believe in ridding ourselves of the current system which places profit and power before people's needs. This involves getting organised, fighting back and collectively taking those decisions which affect our daily lives, communities and workplaces.

We think people must take control of their community and workplace struggles, support each other, encourage practical solidarity, build the necessary skills and knowledge for those struggles and generate strong, permanent, grassroots networks.

Many of us are involved with local residents', community and campaign groups within the borough. We support workers in dispute, campaigns against public service cuts and threatened community amenities. We are active on environmental, housing and claimants' issues and resist oppressive policing and state controls.

We encourage everyone to share their views at our open, monthly meetings where consensus is the aim. We would welcome your involvement at our meetings and discussion evenings and with practical activities including distributing this newsletter and producing other materials including posters and leaflets.

To learn more about HSG visit haringey.org.uk, befriend us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter @hsg, contact us at PO Box 2474, London N8, phone 0845 2235270 or email info@haringey.org.uk

HOMES FOR ALL

The Tories want only rich people to live in London. Since they came to power they have been systematically attacking everything that supports truly affordable housing.

First they introduced the bedroom tax, meaning that all council and housing association tenants with spare bedrooms have to pay extra to stay in their homes - even though there aren't enough smaller homes for everyone to move into.

Then they introduced the benefit cap, which limits the amount of benefits a household can get. Some households have had their housing benefit reduced to a measly 50p a week. From April 2016 the benefit cap will be reduced even further, meaning more and more people unable to pay their rent.

Now they're trying to introduce Pay to Stay: in London, social housing tenants earning £40,000 a year will have to pay market rents to stay in their homes. Not everyone earns this much - but housing in London is so expensive that more than half of those affected won't be able to afford to pay their rent.

If you add the fact that social housing funding has been cut by 60% since 2010, it becomes obvious that the government is doing all it can to destroy social housing.

It's already started happening: Genesis, one of London's biggest housing associations, has just announced it wants to stop building new social housing and consider going private instead. Councils have been selling off social housing to private developers, like the Aylesbury Estate in Southwark and the Sweets Way Estate in Barnet. The Labour-led council here in Haringey wants to demolish up to 4,000 homes on and around its council estates, including a plan to demolish the Broadwater Farm estate.

What can be done? Well, we could look at the Aylesbury and Sweets Way Estates for inspiration, where local residents and housing activists occupied the estates to prevent the council's goons from pulling them down. Groups like Haringey Defend Council Housing are protesting against Haringey Council's dodgy 'regeneration' plans, letting them know the people of Haringey are watching what they're doing.

We have to show resistance to the plans to make London housing affordable only to the rich - by whatever means necessary. Estates have already been pulled down, people have already been forced out of their homes by benefit caps and rent hikes. How much harder will it have to become to live here before we start fighting back?

LOCAL GROUPS: Haringey Defend Council Housing ([facebook.com/HDCHPage](https://www.facebook.com/HDCHPage)); Haringey Housing Action Group (haringeyhousingaction.org.uk)



“Capitalism is the extraordinary belief that the nastiest of people for the nastiest of motives will somehow work for the benefit of all.”

AUSTERITY IS A LIE!

There seems to always be someone on TV or radio telling us we need to “tighten our belts”. Politicians tell us to “suffer” a bit longer to get the country “back on its feet”. Austerity, austerity, austerity - that's all we seem to hear nowadays. And it always comes from those with the most: the biggest houses; the best paid jobs; the largest cars. If we need austerity how come it's never the rich that have to give anything up?

Since 2005 the wealth of the UK's richest 20% has risen by 64%. For the poorest 20% it has fallen by 57%.

Austerity is a con. The Tories are using it to get what they always wanted. A society where the rich live in the lap of luxury while the rest of us fight each other for the scraps that are left.

As a country we have loads of money. The question is what we do with it. While the

government is cutting £12 billion from the welfare budget for those most in need, it gave £60 billion in grants, subsidies and tax relief to big business. There are thousands of public sector jobs cuts but we give the arms trade over £700 million a year in subsidies. No pay rises for workers yet politicians get a 10% pay rise. People are committing suicide because of the bedroom tax and benefit cap but private developers have been given £1 billion to build houses that they rent back to us at stupidly high prices. They are closing hospitals while corporation tax has been cut from 28% to 19% for big business.

Some graffiti recently appeared that said “the greatest trick the rich ever pulled was convincing the world that the poor are to blame”. Too bloody right! The rich are doing what they always do. They are ripping us off so they can get even richer. They won't change until we challenge them. But

how do we change things? The rich seem so powerful. But don't believe their hype. The rich are actually shit scared of working and unemployed people coming together. That's why they are bringing in laws to try and make it harder for us to go on strike and getting rid of things like Legal Aid.

There's loads we can do. Support striking workers against their bosses. Every worker's victory is a victory for all workers. Don't buy into the “strivers v skivers” rubbish - we have enough money for everyone to have a decent living standard. Those in power use immigration to divide us so we fight amongst ourselves. Don't believe their lies. Support campaigns fighting to change things.

Austerity is a lie. We need to turn the tables. It should be the rich suffering - not us. They were the ones who screwed things up in the first place.

LIBRARIES: A RIGHT NOT A LUXURY

Haringey's Labour Council has unveiled plans to drastically change the Marcus Garvey Library.

In another attack on our public services the library would lose its dedicated youth space on the top floor. Half of the space would disappear, to be replaced by the Council's own Housing Customer Service Centre which is due to be moved from Apex House in Seven Sisters, despite announcing during a cabinet meeting last March that there would be “no loss of library space”.

This outrageous decision means the library faces being closed for six months for refurbishment, without any suitable alternative space for library users during the closure.

Haringey Council have treated the library and its users with contempt and misled, if not lied, about the planned changes. They even hung floor plans in the library with misleading colour coding which hid the fact that the Library becomes a side service within the new Customer Service Centre, which represents a core change of use.

If you thought the Tories were bad, this Labour council further insulted the users of Marcus Garvey, by selling cherished libraries books on the cheap. Books that reflect the cultural diversity of our local community.

These decisions were made without any proper consultation with the community.



The council do this time and time again, showing that they have no respect for us or our public services.

The Friends of Marcus Garvey Library decided that this was too much to bear and fought

back. After a social media campaign the Council stopped selling the books, and then tried to claim they value our heritage. The fight to save all the library facilities is hotting up.

MORE INFO: friendsofmglib@gmail.com

DISABLED PEOPLE AGAINST THE CUTS

Disabled people Against the Cuts are a group who seek real and systemic change to ensure rights and justice for all disabled people. We oppose the ongoing injustices that we and others face. We intend to keep taking our fight into parliament and onto the streets.

We see on a daily basis how corporate greed and corruption negatively impacts our lives. Our blood is literally being spilled to make profits for rich shareholders.

We are forced, as a community, to endure the ongoing abuse of disabled people by Work Capability Assessments carried out by Maximus; subjected to unfair and unjust treatment by disreputable work providers like A4e, Ingeus and Maximus; left to wait months to be assessed by providers like Capita and ATOS for essential disability benefits.

Also, council services on which disabled people rely are being slashed and farmed out to private sector corporations whose aim is to make a profit

rather than to provide essential services.

Imagine not knowing whether, at your next annual care assessment, you may lose the right to leave your house when you want; lose any right to choose what you do and when; and lose the most basic right to use the toilet when you need to. With the closure of the Independent Living Fund this is what disabled people with care and support needs now face with several councils giving out incontinence pads to continent disabled people supposedly to reduce their 'dependence' on human support to use the toilet.

Neither of the main parties agreed to scrap the barbaric sanctions which leave disabled people, pregnant women, families and others without money for even food. In the 7th richest nation in the world this, plus the massive increase of foodbanks and malnutrition, is a disgrace. When we are forced through

poverty to choose between heating and eating every politician should resign in shame.

MORE INFO

www.dpac.uk.net or @dis_ppl_protest



MIGRANTS WELCOME

While Downing Street has been reluctant to help the thousands of refugees coming to Europe from Syria, Eritrea and Afghanistan, others are showing sympathy. Football fans have been raising 'Refugees welcome' signs at matches, hundreds are driving to Calais with donations of clothes and food, and tens of thousands have marched on Whitehall in solidarity.

But why does this sympathy with refugees fail to extend to other newcomers in Britain? Some MPs and parts of the media are making a distinction between 'genuine refugees', who they say are leaving their countries because they have to, and 'migrants', who they say just come to Europe because they want to.

Without question, we must show solidarity with the unprecedented numbers of people fleeing war and state violence. But it is wrong to imagine that only those escaping war deserve to settle here. Every year, the UK imprisons and deports thousands of asylum seekers fleeing persecution because of their race, gender, sexuality or religion. Every year economic migrants come here, not because they are greedy but because poverty, just like war, kills people.

The truth is Britain has always had a migrant crisis, caused by the way migrants are treated by the state. Let's not forget Joy Gardner, brutally suffocated by police because she had overstayed her visa. Or Jimmy Mubenga, killed when he was forced on a flight back to Uganda. Or the people currently locked up in UK detention centres because the state has decided they might not have the right to be here.

It is right to pressure our government to accept refugees. But we must do more than show solidarity with those we have decided have a right to be here. If we continue to say that some people don't deserve to live in Britain, we carry on giving the state the power to attack people for the crime of being born in the wrong place.

All new migrants, refugees and otherwise, should be welcome here. As for the immigration officials who enforce the UK's racist policy of raiding businesses, locking up migrants and deporting people with the help of violent thugs, let's show them a different kind of welcome in Haringey: the kind of welcome they deserve.

COUNCIL CUTS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

It turns out five years of heavy public service cuts were just the beginning. As austerity continues, Haringey council will continue to cut services and some of the most vulnerable people across the borough will be affected.

Given this situation and the potential for worse to come, what realistically can community activists do? Of course we should be organising in our communities to resist every cut. Inspiring campaigns like the 'Save Marcus Garvey Library' being organised by local residents show that we can still pressure the council to protect our services.

But where local services have already been slashed, can we as a community step in to support each other and self-manage programmes we rely on? For example, activists are starting to plan a Tottenham Supper Club, which will provide regular fresh and healthy meals for anyone who wants and needs them.

No one is saying that we should be doing the government's job for them and take over the running of the welfare state. What we can do though is work out how we can collectively manage certain services to meet our needs, show that community engagement is essential and begin to provide models for how communities can support each other when the state abandons us.

If we want to continue to support our children or older people when the council have closed down our centres, we need to be having this discussion. Anti-cuts activists should be continuing to campaign to protect council budgets, but start to think about opportunities to get practical too. Otherwise our rights to these services will be collectively forgotten and bringing them back will take even longer.

To get involved in the Tottenham Supper Club, please email uzak@hotmail.co.uk

THE WORKERS ARE REVOLTING

You won't see it on the news but workers are saying "enough is enough". Many are fed up being treated like dirt and have decided to fight back for their dignity and rights.

Tube workers have rightly been striking against forced changes to their employment conditions. Ok, some of us are inconvenienced a bit but it's nothing compared to what's happening to the workers. It looks like the bosses are beginning to give in.

Meanwhile workers at Sotheby's auction house are demanding an end to victimisation. The "Sotheby's 4" were locked out of work after a protest over sick pay. Along with their union and other groups, the workers are now also fighting for their reinstatement. The support they are getting is amazing.

At the University of London cleaners fought for improved conditions, and won. They campaigned and went on strike until their wages were raised. Their trade union, Unison, became more of a hindrance than a help - but rather than give up, the cleaners formed their own union, the Independent

Workers of Great Britain (IWGB). They kept striking and won sick pay, holiday pay and pension rights.

At Morgan Stanley a union rep, Graeme Boxall, was dismissed for helping electricians he represents. Supporters picketed the building where Graeme is employed and blocked the site entrance. The management, private security and police stood around scratching their heads wondering what to do. Within a few hours management gave in and Graeme was re-employed.

In Camden, 300 dinner ladies finally got the London Living wage after months of protest. It means a pay rise of £2.55 per hour. With the general election imminent their employers and the council agreed to the demands. So the dinner ladies deliver the first lesson of the academic year: crap pay can be fought.

There are loads more we don't have space to report on. But it shows if you take on the bosses and stay strong you can win. Contact us with similar stories and we will print them.

THE SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

The Tories are hell-bent on punishing those receiving benefits, especially the unemployed. Their latest vindictive scheme is the Community Work Placements (CWP) where those of us claiming job seekers allowance are forced to work for no pay.

Thousands of jobseekers are made to work 30 hours a week for six months for nothing more than their benefit in charity shops and other organisations. This displaces volunteers and, in some, cases, paid workers. Groups up and down the country have campaigned against this exploitation and we, Haringey Solidarity Group, forged links with those forced to work in charity shops locally.

We targeted North London Hospice (NLH) who, with 18 shops across north London, were the biggest local provider of placements. After almost a year of picketing their shops, distributing thousands of leaflets, meeting and talking with their senior executives and, most recently, occupying and closing their shops, NLH announced that they were pulling out of the scheme and offering no further placements.

We welcome the charity's decision to end their participation and join over 600 charities nationally who rely only on willing volunteers to



continue their valuable work in our communities.

But we are not done yet. Other local charities are still at it and we are after them. Unlike paid workers, the unemployed cannot organise in the workplace - they need the support of the local community to not be made scapegoats for the failings of capitalism when the blame lies with greedy, rich bastards who take, take, take.

We want to see the back of the CWP scheme and ensure that no-one is forced to work for nothing in Haringey. We are setting our sights on a fresh

target on whom we will heap the pressure and embarrassment they deserve.

The Tories think they can get away with this and we need to tell them to stick it where the sun don't shine. If you know anyone on the scheme, we are here to offer support. If you know of a charity or organisation participating in the scheme, let us know.

Better still why not join us for some street action and mutual support - you know it makes sense. Contact us at info@haringey.org.uk

YAZIDI WOMEN TAKE THE OFFENSIVE

Last year 10,000 Yazidis fled to the Shengal mountains where many, especially children, died of hunger, thirst and exhaustion. Many more were killed or kidnapped by Islamic State (IS) fighters. We all saw the pictures on TV and reports in the papers. What the media never reported was that one year on, the Yazidis went back to the same mountains. This time in a protest to vow that nothing will ever be the same again.

Last year Yazidi women were shown as helpless victims of Islamic State. But now the press has ignored them when the same women decided to arm themselves and mobilize socially, politically and militarily. In January this year the Yazidis from the mountains and refugee camps formed the Shengal Founding Council.

They have formed committees for education, culture, health, defence, women, youth, and economy and organize around everyday issues. The council is based on something called democratic autonomy, where the power lies with people at the grass roots.

They have also formed the YBŞ (Shengal Resistance Units) and the all-women's army the YPJ-Shengal to defend themselves. Neither the Iraqi peshmerga or international coalition forces have helped them with arms even though they are fighting the same enemy.

In July, women of all ages set up the autonomous Shengal Women's Council, promising that "the organization of Yazidi women will be the revenge for all massacres." The women decided that families must not intervene when girls want to participate in any part of the struggle. They do not want

PEOPLE HAVE THE POWER WHEN WILL THEY USE IT?

It is clear for all to see, that western democracies are not functioning effectively. Since the dawn of the modern democratic era in the late 19th century, democracy has expressed itself through nation-states and national parliaments. People elect representatives who pull the levers of national power for a fixed period. But this arrangement is in evident decline, as we saw in the last General Election, the turnout of voters was just 66%, which meant 34% did not vote, whereas the government got only 24%. This shows that the current system does not represent the majority of the people.

Many 'democratic' states have slid towards autocracy, absolute power, maintaining the outward appearance of democracy through elections, but without the rights and institutions that are equally important aspects of a 'functioning' democratic system.

Is there any real alternative to this disaster?

We favour a diverse political participation, where the problems of local people are decided by them, to replace state and capitalism with a decentralized, participatory democracy anchored entirely in public town meetings. The goal of this direct democracy is life according to the principle "To each according to their needs" - a society in which competition, the market economy and money have been replaced by harmony between people and nature.

to "buy back" their kidnapped sisters, but liberate them.

"For the first time in our history we take up arms, because with the last massacre we understood that nobody will protect us; we must do it ourselves," - words from a young YPJ-Shengal fighter. She explained how girls like herself never dared to have dreams and only sat at home until they got married. But like her, hundreds have now joined the struggle, and joined the resistance.

Many people think this a utopian dream, but as Abdullah Ocalan leader of PKK argued in his pamphlet "Democratic Confederalism" whereas direct democracies use direct elections and the state uses coercion, democratic confederalism is flexible, multi-cultural, anti-monopolistic and consensus-oriented. Ecology and feminism are central pillars.

In the frame of this kind of self-administration, an alternative economy will become necessary, which increases the resources of the society instead of exploiting them and thus does justice to the needs of the society.

We see this concept is working well in the social revolution of Kobane and Rojava in Kurdistan where they formed the Tev-Dam (the movement of the democratic Society) to bring everyone together.

Therefore we need to cultivate these seeds in our political spheres, the public spaces where the private life shades into public life, where the personal becomes, to one degree or another, the communal. Communities are the germ of this political realm, in our urban environment instead of shutting people off from one another; we need to encourage them to encounter and to interact with each other more often, because together we can create a movement to transform society.

One year ago, the world watched the genocide of the Yazidis. Today, the same Kurds who - while everyone else ran away - rescued the Yazidis, are now being bombed by the IS-supporting Turkish state, with the approval of NATO. When the states that contributed to the rise of IS promise to defeat it and destroy the social fabric of the Middle East along the way, the only survival option is to establish autonomous self-defence and grassroots democracy.